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ABSTRACT

The Higher Education Learning Package (HELP) program at Sacramento City--an interdisciplinary approach to basic skill development for high-risk, nontraditional students--has four goals: (1) promotion of student retention at the community college through cognitive and attitudinal development, (2) personal development of students through a supportive educational environment, (3) skill development of students through highly relevant instruction immediately applicable to content, and (4) mainstreaming of high-risk students into regular college classes. The population for an evaluative study of the program were the fall 1983 HELP students, who were advised into the program by counselors or by the college's Assessment Center on the basis of Stanford Test of Academic Skills scores. Both pre- and posttest measures and a control group for comparison (in some areas) were used. These measures included a standardized reading test, student records, surveys and questionnaires, and personal interviews. Results indicated that the HELP program does foster the success of high-risk students. (Appendixes include a reading habit survey, HELP follow-up survey, and HELP follow-up questionnaire for students.) (DF)

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Success in a College "Headstart" Program: An Evaluation Study

submitted to

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by

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and

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H E L P

INTRODUCTION:

The HELP Program (Higher Education Learning Package) at Sacramento City College is an interdisciplinary approach to dealing with basic skill development within the existing community college curriculum. Reading and writing skills are taught within the context of a regular content course. A team of three teachers (reading, writing and content) integrates skills and content learning within a three hour block of time three days a week for a total of 9 units (6 in English and 3 in a content course). Students take an additional 3 units in study skills the other 2 days of the week.

The program, designed for high-risk, nontraditional students, has as its goals: 1) promotion of student retention at the community college through cognitive and attitudinal development; 2) personal development of students through a supportive educational environment; 3) skill improvement through highly relevant instruction immediately applicable to content; and 4) mainstreaming of high risk students into regular college classes. The purpose of this study is to determine if the HELP program is successful in meeting these goals.

All students who take English classes at Sacramento City College are required to take the College Assessment Test (Stanford Test of Academic Skills, TASK). On the basis of the test results, students are recommended to the appropriate level of reading and writing classes. There are sequential classes in both reading and writing that are below the 1A or college level English classes. HELP students take the middle level reading and writing courses or English 71 and English 56. In order to pass on to the next higher level in subsequent semesters, students must score at a particular level on a standardized reading test and must pass a holistically graded writing exam and receive credit in English 56. The reading level (as judged by the TASK) for English 71 students is approximately 9-11.5 grade level.

The majority of students who enroll in the HELP program are advised into the program by counselors or by the college's Assessment Center on the basis of TASK scores. Re-entry students or other "high-risk" students who express insecurity about entering college are frequently encouraged to take the program.

The instructors who comprise the HELP teams feel very positive about HELP as an educational experience. We see our students relax and become comfortable with school. Some get excited about their abilities and their futures. We often witness marked growth in self-confidence, and, in continued contact with students in subsequent semesters, we hear many success stories. In addition, colleagues who have our former students in regular classes often comment on how well they are doing, (i.e. asking intelligent questions, knowing where to go for help). We, therefore, feel and sense that HELP is highly successful in meeting the needs of our students. These feelings have led to our desire to examine some data to determine if HELP is indeed a successful educational program which achieves its goals of promoting success for high-risk students in college.

PROBLEM:

Success is a multi-faceted and elusive concept. Does it mean institutional success (i.e. cost-effectiveness, retention)? or student accomplishment (i.e. higher GPA's)? or personal development (increased self-confidence)?

Past studies of HELP students have examined two areas of student performance (subsequent attempted units taken and subsequent GPA's) as indicators of student and program success. These studies demonstrated that HELP students tended to attempt more units and have higher grade point averages than a control group. While we consider these indicators highly important, we feel they define the success of the educational program, to a large extent, in institutional terms (more students taking more units) rather than in student terms (affective as well as educational development). We, therefore, set out: 1) to establish a multi-faceted criteria for success which would consider institutional concerns (retention, subsequent attempted units) in addition to indications of student academic and personal development and 2) to collect data which would help answer the general question, Does the HELP Program foster the high-risk students' success in college? The population for this study is the Fall 1983 HELP students.

Through discussions with administrators and HELP staff, we sought a complete definition of success which considers the student as a multi-dimensional learner and also is based on the stated goals of HELP. The following categories and specific areas comprise that definition.

I. Academic (Institutional)
Goal 1 - Promotion of Retention, and Goal 4 - Mainstreaming

A. Retention in school for the F'83 semester
B. Continuing at SCC for the S'84 semester
C. GPA for S'84 semester

II. Affective personal development
Goal 2 - Personal Development of Students

A. Self-Concept, in general
B. Self-Concept, as a student/learner
C. Interpersonal skills
D. Occupational goals
E. Personal goals

III. Skills
Goal 3 - Skill Improvement

A. Basic Skills Improvement

1. Pre and post standardized reading test scores
2. Passage of students to next higher level of writing class
3. Student perception of own skill level
4. Grade received in English 71

The specific questions we asked were:

Academic - Goals 1 and 4:

1. Was the retention rate for HELP students higher than the overall retention rate for the entire school for F'83? for social science classes for F'83?

2. Was the retention rate for HELP students higher than for other high-risk students enrolled in a regular developmental reading class?

3. Did a higher percentage of HELP students continue at SCC in the Spring '84 than other high-risk students enrolled in a regular reading class?

4. Did HELP students "mainstream" into the regular college curriculum?

5. Was the S'84 GPA for HELP students higher than the S'84 GPA of high-risk students enrolled in a regular developmental reading class during the F'83 semester?

6. Was the number of units attempted in S'84 higher for the HELP students than the control group?

Affective/Personal Development - Goal 2:

7. Did HELP students increase their self-concept by the end of the semester?

8. Did HELP students perceive themselves as better students after completing the HELP program?

9. Did HELP students increase their abilities to get along with people?

10. Did the HELP program aid students in their occupational goals?

11. Did the HELP program meet the personal objectives and satisfaction of the students enrolled in it?

Skills - Goal 3:

12. Did HELP students significantly increase their scores on a standardized reading test?

13. Did HELP students receive higher grades in English 71 than students enrolled in a regular reading class?

14. Did a higher percentage of HELP students pass on to the next higher level of writing class (English 56 to English 57) than the general English 56 population?

15. Did the HELP students perceive themselves as more competent in basic skills after completing the HELP program?

The overall question this study is asking is "Did the HELP program foster the high-risk students' success in college?" We determined that the answer to this question would be "yes" if there were at least three affirmative answers (in each category) to the specific fifteen questions asked above.

Limitation of the Study

The findings in this study were based on: 1) pre and posttest measures of the HELP students; 2) analysis of two student questionnaires; and 3) comparison of GPA, units attempted, and courses taken of HELP students with a control group of English 71 students, and one comparison with all English 56 students (passage to English 57).

The following limitations should be considered when judging the validity of this study:

1) There is no way of determining if the growth seen in the HELP students is typical of growth of all students enrolled in a sociology course. Future studies should use a control group of sociology students of comparable skill level.

2) The English 71 control group is not entirely representative of the student body. English 71 is a skills course and is designed to provide assistance and support to students which could affect retention rates and student performance.

3) Many of the measures used were informal measures. The instructors alone determined that they measure growth in certain target areas.

4) The personal interviews were conducted by a HELP instructor which may have biased the responses.

Procedure

For purposes of this study, the term "high-risk" student will be operationally defined as students whose reading level, as determined by the Stanford Test of Academic Skills, is below the college or 13th grade reading level. Many of the HELP students could be classified as high-risk for a variety of other reasons (re-entry, poor academic records, and histories of personal problems); however, because we have not devised a way for identifying these characteristics of entering HELP students, the broad operational definition of "high-risk" will be used.

In order to answer the questions we asked, we used both pre and posttest measures and a control group for comparison (in some areas only). The following instruments, sources, and methods were used:

1) Standardized Reading Test (Test of Adult Basic Education TABE) - Students were given one form of the exam in September and one form in January. The results were subjected to an analysis of variance, F test.

2) Student Records - Murray Hasse and Patrick Caffrey of the Sacramento City College Assessment Center are actively involved in ongoing research. Because the Assessment Center has data on all students taking English classes, we were able to obtain the names of a randomly selected group of students who were enrolled in the same developmental reading class as the HELP students in the same semester. This group was comprised of every 5th student listed on all the English 71 rosters for the Fall '83 semester.

2) Student Records (continued)

We then took these names and the names of the HELP students and used the student records to find out: 1) GPA's for Spring '84; 2) number of units attempted for Spring '84; 3) number of HELP students who took English 57 (the next higher level writing class) in the Spring of '84; and 4) the grade received in English 71 (the reading class given HELP students and the general student population whose scores indicated their need for this class).

The Assessment Center's data bank supplied us with information about the general population taking English classes. They were able to give us retention figures for all students taking English 71 (excluding the HELP students). They were also able to tell us the percentage of general population English 56 students (the writing class offered to HELP students and the general population assessed at that level) who moved on to English 57. We could then compare these figures to those of HELP students.

3) Surveys and Questionnaires - At the beginning of the semester an informal reading habit inventory was given to the HELP students. They were asked 25 questions about their reading and study habits. The answers were weighted on a Lickert scale and total scores tabulated. The same survey was given at the end of the semester and the total pre and posttest scores were compared. (See Appendix A)

In addition all Fall '83 HELP students were mailed or given questionnaires in May '84. The questionnaires sought answers to various questions about students' goals, present activities, and perceptions about themselves and about the HELP program. Eight of the questions called for answers on a Lickert scale and were subsequently tabulated. Other answers were also tabulated or categorized by an observer and classified as either positive, negative, or neutral. (See Appendix B). Eighteen out of 28 students (82%) completed and returned the questionnaire.

4) Personal Interviews - Four students were randomly selected from the HELP roster (every 8th name) and were personally interviewed by one of the instructors. The interviews were recorded. The questions that were asked follow:

1) What was the most valuable aspect of the HELP program?
2) What was the least valuable aspect of the HELP program?
3) Would you recommend the program to a friend?
4) If you had it to do over, would you take the program again?
5) What, that you learned in the program, is working for you now?
6) What do you find that you need more experience in now?
7) How was your success affected by HELP?
8) Describe yourself as a person before HELP.
9) Have you changed? If so, how?
10) Were you satisfied with your own participation in HELP?
11) Were you satisfied with the HELP program in general?
12) What were your goals before HELP?
13) What are your goals now?

The answers to these questions were categorized by an independent observer. The responses were judged to be either positive, negative or neutral.

Findings and Observations

Academic/Institutional - Goals 1 and 4:

Findings

After compiling the data, we returned to our initial success criteria to answer the questions we posed.

1) "Was the retention rate for HELP students higher than the overall retention rate for the entire school for the Fall 1983 semester?"

*Yes, the HELP retention rate was 27/31 or 87% while the overall SCC retention rate was 67.8%. Retention rate for all sociology classes campuswide (the content area in the HELP program) was 66.6%.

2) "Was the retention rate for HELP students higher than for other high-risk students enrolled in a regular developmental reading class?"

*Yes, the retention rate for HELP students was 87% while it was 82% for all the students enrolled in English 71 Fall of '83 (151/184 students).

3) "Did a higher percentage of HELP students continue at SCC in the Spring of '84 than other high-risk students enrolled in a regular reading class?"

*No, 75% of HELP students continued; whereas 83% of the control group did.

4) "Did HELP students 'mainstream' into the regular college curriculum?"

*Yes, students who did not choose to continue with the second semester of HELP went into regular college classes with the exception of the 2 who did not enroll at SCC at all.

5) "Was the GPA for HELP students higher than the GPA of high risk students in a regular developmental reading class for the Fall '83 and S'84 semesters?

overall GPA

*Yes, HELP Spring '84 GPA was 2.31 average. The control group was 2.27.

6) "Was the number of units attempted in S'84 higher for HELP students than the control group?"

*Yes, the average number of units attempted by HELP students was 11.04/student; the control was 9.32/student.

Coservations

The HELP students demonstrated a positive pattern of staying in school. Their retention rate was higher than the control group's (which is also a supportive, skills class) and much higher than SCC in general.

Although there is not a great difference in the HELP and control group's GPA's, there is still a positive pattern of performance demonstrated by the HELP students. This pattern is also seen in the number of units attempted in subsequent semesters. with the HELP students, on the average, taking 1.72 more units.

The only area in which the HELP students did not show a higher performance than the control group was continuing at SCC in the spring '84 semester (75% as opposed to 83%). We must consider here that English 71 is also a helping/supportive class which might positively skew the percentage of continuing students. The overall rate for all students who continued from F'83 to S'84 semesters was 71%.

Affective/Personal Development - Goal 2

Findings

7 & 8) Did HELP students increase their self-concept by the end of the semester?

*Yes, according to the student questionnaire 12 students strongly agreed that they had more confidence in themselves as a result of the HELP program; 4 agreed and only 2 disagreed. It is interesting to note, however, that there was a less intensely positive response to the statement, "I felt like a more competent student after I completed the HELP program." (6 strongly agreed; 8 agreed; 2 no opinion and 2 disagreed).

9) Did HELP students increase their abilities to get along with people?

*Yes, according to the student questionnaire 14/18 students agreeed that this was the case, 10 strongly agreed.

10) Did the HELP program aid students in their occupational goals (i.e. "improve chances for getting a good job").

*No, 10 students either disagreed or had no opinion about this statement. Eight students, however, did agree that HELP was beneficial for job purposes. In general, however, students are not able to relate the HELP experiences to improved occupational goals.

11) Did the HELP program meet the personal objectives and satisfaction of the students enrolled in it?

*Yes, students had a unanimous positive response to this question. Only 2 equivocated a bit by stating that there was "too much crammed in one semester" and "I already knew most of the information

Observations

In general, HELP students felt positive about their experience in the program. All of the students claimed that the HELP classes met their personal objectives. The open-ended statement at the end of the questionnaire ("If I hadn't completed the HELP program, at this time I would be doing ...") elicited remarks that also gave insight into the positive satisfaction students experienced with the program.

An independent observer categorized these remarks into positive, neutral, and negative. There were 11 positive, 6 neutral and 1 negative. Some of the positive remarks follow:

"I want to thank everyone in the HELP program for the support and understanding they have given me. I can now listen to people and most of all my kids bragging about the success I have made to date. I feel good knowing my kids are no longer ashamed of me and that I am able to be an influence on their lives."

(I would be) "doing worse than ever in other classes because I think the HELP program has helped me to be a better and more responsible student. I have learned a lot from the program, and what I have learned will be useful in my future and today."

(I would be doing) "fast food work for the rest of my life because it was the support I gained from HELP that encouraged me to seek a well paying job."

(I would be doing) "a lot of searching for answers to questions about my ability to learn. Also the program gave me a chance to know people better because I spent more time with each person and found opportunities to do peer counseling."

(I would be doing) "a much poorer job in my classes. I have learned the importance of going slow and doing well."

Appendix C shows the tabulated results of student responses to the eight statements which were rated on a Lickert scale. The statement agreed with most strongly was, "The HELP program improved my confidence in myself." The statement that all students responded positively to (no negative and no "no opinion") and the one that received the highest number of positive points (83) was, "The HELP program gave me specific skills that will improve my chances for success in college." The other two statements which received the highest positive marks were; "The HELP program improved my ability to get along with people," and "I would recommend the HELP program to a friend," and "The HELP program gave me support in my personal life." The least positive response (25 points below the next rank) were to, "The HELP program improved my chances for getting a good job."

Responses on the student questionnaire indicated that HELP students improved both their self-images and their communication abilities throughout the semester. Instructor observation would also confirm this. We noticed students becoming more positive and directed toward educational tasks and personal decisions. We also saw students becoming more adept at small group and large discussion group interaction: listening better, responding less emotionally, expressing ideas more freely.

As mentioned previously, students tended to have a more positive reaction to the statement concerning their improved self-concept in general than to the statement dealing with their image of themselves as students and learners. Why would there be this discrepancy? Could it be that their previous educational experience had been so negative and unsuccessful that they were still carrying this image? Or do they feel overwhelmed with the amount of knowledge and skill practice that they realize they still need? Better methods for assessing these areas are needed in future studies.

Skill Development - Goal 3

Findings

12) Did HELP students significantly increase their scores on a standardized reading test?

*No, when the pre and posttest standardized test scores were subjected to an F-test, it was found that there was no significant difference in test scores at the .05 level. However; twenty-five out of the 28 students who completed the semester took both the pre and post standardized test. Of that 25, 15 increased their scores on the test, more than the SEM (Standard Error of Measure).

13) "Did HELP students receive higher grades in English 71 than students enrolled in a regular English 71 (developmental reading) class?"

*Yes. On the whole, HELP students had a slightly higher number of A's and B's and a slightly lower number of DCF's. Fifty percent (14/18) of the control group as opposed to 36% (10/28) of the HELP students received grades of C or lower.

14) Did a higher percentage of HELP students pass on to the next higher level of writing class (English 56 to English 57) than the general student population enrolled in English 56?

*Yes, 40% of HELP students completing the Fall '83 semester moved on to English 57; whereas 21% (65/308) of the general English 56 population moved to English 57 in the Spring '84 semester.

15) Did HELP students perceive themselves as more competent in basic skills after completing the HELP program?"

*Yes, the group mean on the reading habit survey increased by 12 points (51.45 to 63.68). Only 2 students' scores decreased by more than one point. Seventeen out of 22 (77%) students increased their scores and 8 more (47%) more than 20 points. Responses on the questionnaire also indicated that students perceived they had acquired skills that will make them more successful students (11 strongly agree, 7 agree, and no negative responses).

Observations

Statistical analysis of the standardized test revealed that there was no significant difference at the .05 level between the pre and posttest scores. Although 60% of the students did increase their scores, it was not a large enough increase to yield significance.

Standardized tests describe rather than explain reading behavior. Many factors from experiental background to the interest appeal of selections can influence performance on a test; therefore a standardized test is not a definitive indicator of growth. Also the objectives of the instructional program may not be the same as the objectives of the test. We, therefore, looked at other measures such as student grades, passage to next higher level of skill improvement. These measures gave a more positive picture of growth than the standardized test scores. It is interesting to note, for example, that all of the 10 students whose scores went down on the standardized test perceived themselves as better readers on the reading habit survey.

We were curious about the 5 students whose perceptions of their reading habits on the informal reading habit survey were less positive at the end of the semester. We tried, knowing the students, to analyze why their perceptions decreased. We were able to classify them into 2 different categories: 1) Students (2/22) who already had fairly competent, or above the HELP class average, skills upon entry into the program and who didn't have the overwhelming need for improvement that most of the students had; and 2) students who had a negative, defensive reaction to the HELP experience. These students (3 out of the 22 seemed to have developed a confrontive behavior pattern toward authority combined with a lack of belief in themselves as successful learners. Their behavior was often disruptive in class, and they had difficulty working in small groups.

The opposite type of behavior was observed in the students who increased over 20 points on the survey 8/22). Their attitudes remained positive and enthusiastic. They readily participated in small group interaction and often expressed a realization of the importance of what they were accomplishing.

Personal Interviews

Four randomly selected students were asked thirteen questions about the HELP program (see p. 6 for questions). The interviews were tape-recorded and the student responses categorized by an independent observer as positive, negative, or neutral.

All but five responses from all four students were rated by the observer a positive. Five were rated as neutral. In general the students were extremely enthusiastic about the program and what they had gained from it. Only one student could think of something to say in response to the "least valuable" question and that was "There's so much thrown at you all at once," but he followed that up with a discussion of the value of that approach since it "encourages you to be a dedicated student."

The one area of the interviews that especially stood out was the students' feelings of increased self-confidence and the ability to communicate with others. Comments which demonstrate this include:

"I was closed-up and inward. Now I have friends and am outspoken."

"I have more courage now and nobody can stop me from getting my education."

"I was very shy and scared to share; had no self-confidence. Now I can do it. If I fail, I try again. I'm not afraid to express myself."

"I was mousey, unsure and had myself on a downer. My sister told me I'd fail, but now I can show them my honors certificate. I'm something special."

Students indicated that they learned things in HELP that they will "carry forever." Things mentioned in this regard were: writing skills; time scheduling; reading effectively (SQ3R, margin notes, mapping, finding main ideas, outlines, note cards); communicating with and understanding others; and speaking out in a classroom.

The five neutral responses indicated that students felt they needed more work in certain areas: "I need more experience in grammar and writing mechanics." "I need more help in English 57 (next level writing course). I wish there were a HELP backup class this semester." "There was too much to learn in one semester."

Three out of the four students stated that HELP aided them in clarification of their goals. All students expressed a desire to complete their degrees at SCC and then move on to a four-year college.

Each student mentioned the helpfulness of the instructors and the instructors' caring, respectful manner. They also talked about the support they felt from the friendships among the students.

All students indicated they would recommend HELP to a friend -- "I was so satisfied that when I was a peer counselor I recommended it to everybody."

Further Observations

This study afforded us the opportunity to better understand our students; to clarify and confirm some observations; and to identify areas for needed change and further study. From the questionnaire, we have learned:

1) Of the students who returned the questionnaire, 16 out of 18 are still attending SCC.

2) There is no prevailing major among the group.

3) The two not attending SCC are not attending because of family problems or moving out of town.

4) Fourteen out of 18 students have completed more than 15 units at SCC.

5) Career goals are diverse with the most prevalent being helping professions such as youth authority, corrections, nursing, counseling.

6) The students' objectives for entering the HELP program, as asked on the questionnaire, were extremely individual and varied, but, in answer to the question - "Do you think HELP met that objective? - all students answered "yes" and 2 answered an equivocal "yes and no," and explained, "It's hard to cram so much into one semester" and "A lot of things I already knew about myself."

7) All 18 students who returned the questionnaire plan to complete at least an AA degree. Thirteen expect to get at least a bachelor's and 7 want to continue on to either a professional degree or a doctorate.

8) Background Information: Sixteen out of the 18 responding were female. Most (11/18) are single with one dependent. Nine out of 18 are Caucasian, 1 Asian, 4 Black and 4 Hispanic. The ages range from 18-41+ with 18-20 being the predominant age (9/18).

9) HELP students are younger than we thought. We had inaccurately categorized most people as older, re-entry students. Most HELP students are under 25 and have not been out of school for a long period (over 5 years).

10) HELP students do not hold down full time jobs as we had thought. Very few work more than 20 hours/week; however, very few are economically self-sufficient and rely on a variety of sources for funds.

11) Instilling self-confidence is a crucial part of the effectiveness of the program and more instructor effort needs to be directed toward improving confidence in students as learners/students.

12) Because students state some reservation about their competence as learners/students, we think they are expressing a basic fear and mistrust of how they will handle regular college classes. We, therefore, feel a follow-up support class of study skills/personal development should be offered to the HELP students as a group, maybe meeting only once a week, in the semester following their HELP experience.

13) Re-entry women (women over 35) who have been out of school for over 10 years are among the most enthusiastic supporters of HELP, as judged by their comments, skill improvements, and perceptions of themselves as students (based on the survey, test scores, questionnaires and observations).

CONCLUSIONS --

SUCCESS ACHIEVED?

The success index we established at the outset of this project was a positive answer to at least three questions in each of the three established categories. According to that criterion, yes, the HELP program does foster the success of high-risk students.

The goals of HELP: 1) retention; 2) academic and personal development; 3) reading, writing and study skill development; and 4) mainstreaming of students into regular classes have, according to our evaluation, been met. The way the class is presently structured seems to be effective in achieving our stated objectives.

The most definitive and obvious area of success, as revealed by this study, however, tended to be in the affective area. Although there was a pattern of higher achievement, the GPA's subsequent units attempted, and retention were only minimally higher than the control group's. However, student's confidence substantially increased, and their interaction with other people improved.

This study points out the importance of viewing the student as a multidimensional total when discussing educational success. A student's GPA or test scores are not enough to evaluate success. The affective domain is one that is often not considered in studies of effective education, yet it is an area that influences the entire future of the student and the impact he or she will have on the general community.

Since control group for affective considerations was not used in this study, we cannot conclude that HELP students achieved a higher self-concept, were more personally satisfied, perceived themselves as better students and communicators than most students at SCC. However, we can observe that there are areas where the HFLP students overwhelmingly perceived positive growth and change in personal behavior. This is education in its very truest sense and must be a permanent index to educational success.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY OF HELP

The following are suggestions for improving upon the present study:

1) The control group used should be students enrolled in the same content class that is offered in the HELP program. They should be given the TASK exam at the beginning of the semester and all students who score at the 71 level made part of the control group for comparing growth in reading skills, retention rates, subsequent units attempted, continuation at SCC, growth in self-concept and perception of skill development.

2) A pre/post informal reading inventory based on the content text should be used as another measure for judging improvement in student reading skill.

3) A formal instrument such as the Tennessee Test of Self-Concept should be used for a pre/post measurement.

4) A more appropriate standardized test should be used. The TABE norms do not go beyond the 12.9 grade level, consequently the growth of students who scored above this level could not be measured.

5) The Fall '83 HELP students should be followed for one or two more semesters.

6) HELP students should be asked to express their goals in writing the first day of class so the achievement of personal goals can be measured more accurately.

7) There should be a follow-up study of students who drop out of HELP -- why they dropped; how HELP could better meet their needs.

Instructors' Perceptions, Some Added Thoughts

Because we feel so positive about HELP as an educational experience for the students and an instructional experience for the staff, we spent some time reflecting about what we thought we have done right in implementing the HELP model. Our conclusions are based on the data we have gathered but, most of all, based on our observations and those indefinable intuitive senses that probably contribute the most to good teaching.

1) We demystified and "demonstratized" the college experience by making our students comfortable and relaxed in the classroom.

2) We made a conscious effort to concentrate on promoting communication skills using small groups as our major vehicle and worked on creating a whole group support system in connection with working on academic skills.

3) We presented skills in small, sequential segments always modeling, practicing, and monitoring progress with immediate feedback.

4) We met with each student individually at least three times throughout the semester and concentrated on their unique needs and gave them individual goals to work on.

5) We as a team met weekly for planning sessions to make sure our objectives were compatible, our lessons integrated and our concerns expressed.

6) We tried as much as possible to interact as a teaching team -- working together on activities, rather than "turn teaching" and modeling success behaviors needed for life (such as communication skills and commitment, care, and follow-through)

7) We made an effort to keep the content and activities relevant to the students' life and pointed out how certain ideas and skills could be used in their every day lives.

8) We were available to students at break times, during office hours and other times as one way of showing concern and care.

9) We gave support to extra-classroom activities such as community resources, student events on campus, and availability of financial aid.

The HELP program is structured to promote the affective growth that we have noticed: 1) classes meet in 3 hour blocks of time to permit extensive instructor/student and student/student interaction. 2) The instructors involved in the program know that a supportive environment is one of the HLEP goals, and they assiduously work toward that end. Classes are structured so as to allow for a significant amount of time in small group and large group discussions and activities. Individual conferences are held monthly with each student in order to promote communication about student perceptions, feelings, and concerns; and give students feedback about their strengths and their needs (They are given one task/skill from each instructor that they can emphasize in the next month). 3) The instructors interact in an open, caring way with each other and with the students, thus serving as role models for a style of communicating and relating.

The question, thus, comes to mind -- "Does the success of HELP result from the way the course is structured (i.e. integrated, large blocks of time) or from the personalities, styles, and expertise of the instructors involved?" This, of course, is an area for further exploration. We, however, through observation alone, feel that it is a combination of all factors. The structure of the integrated classes allows for the supportive efforts of the staff and students to be effective.

Determining the cause of HELP's success may not be fully possible and should not detract from its notable accomplishments. The positive/affective development of the HELP students is something which has immeasurable success value from the standpoint of effective education as well as personal satisfaction. Students who feel positive and confident about themselves and who learn to improve interaction with others have the foundation for growth in all aspects of life whether it be continued education or responsible employment.

APPENDIX A

Reading Habit Inventory

Directions: For each of the following statements, check under Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Usually, or Always. Do not omit any of the items. Be truthful and utterly realistic. Represent your reading habits as they actually are.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Always
1. When I pick up a page of print, I notice the paragraphs specifically.					
2. I read like I drive, with varying rates of speed, depending upon varying reading conditions.					
3. While reading, I find it easy to keep my mind on the material before me.					
4. After I have been reading for a while, I stop reading for a few moments and rest my eyes by looking at some distant object.					
5. I am alert to the role which punctuation plays in aiding me to get the meaning.					
6. When I pick up a piece of reading matter for the first time, I look for certain specific items which will aid me in reading the piece more efficiently.					
7. I read groups of words at one glance.					
8. I notice a distinctive style, or flavor of the author.					
9. I enjoy reading.					
10. I can read for long periods of time without a feeling of eye fatigue or tiredness.					
11. After I read a paragraph, if required to do so, I could sum up the main idea clearly and briefly in my own words.					
12. I make a practice of skimming articles frequently.					
13. In reading a paragraph I usually try to see the organization of its thought content: I look for the main idea, and the details which support it.					

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	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Always
14. I do not lose my place, or skip words or lines, while reading.					
15. I am mildly conscious of grammatical structure while reading.					
16. I feel comfortable and perfectly at ease while reading.					
17. In reading larger units of writing (articles, chapters, etc.) I try to see the outline and total structure of the author's thought.					
18. I have very little difficulty in remembering what I read.					
19. When I read, especially for any length of time, I make sure that the page before me is adequately illuminated.					
20. When I read, I am reading for some definite purpose, and I try to keep that purpose clearly in mind as I read.					
21. I read the preface of a book.					
22. In reading more difficult material, after reading a paragraph or a section, I pause to summarize in a momentary flashback the material I have just covered.					
23. While reading, I am aware of questions which arise in my own thing about the material being read.					
24. While reading, I hold the page 15 to 20 inches from my eyes.					
25. I am aware that with practice a person can improve his reading skills and I make a conscious effort generally toward that end.					
Count the checks in each column to obtain:	(A)				
Multiply by:	(B)	0	1	2	3	4
to obtain:	(C)		%	%	%	%

Now add the figures in row C for your final score: _____%

APENDIX B

Appendix B

HELP Followup Survey

PART I: College and Career Information

1. Are you now attending S.C.C.? YES_____ NO_____

2. What is your major? _____

3. If you are attending, how many units are you taking this semester? _____

4. If you're no longer attending S.C.C., why? _____

_____

5. How many units have you completed at S.C.C.?

_____ 1 - 14 _____ 12 - 15

_____ 15 - 29 _____ 45 or more

6. What are you immediate career goals (within the next two years)?

_____

_____

_____

7. What are your long-range career goals?

_____

_____

8. What was your primary objective (reason) for attending HELP?

_____

_____

_____

9. Do you think HELP met that objective? YES _____ NO _____

If no, please explain why: _____

_____

_____

10. What is the highest degree you ultimately plan to complete?

_____ AA Degree

_____ A Bachelor's Degree

_____ A Teaching Credential

_____ A Master's Degree (one or two years beyond a Bachelor's Degree)

_____ A Professional Degree (M.D., D.D.S., J.D.)

_____ A Doctorate (Ph.D., Ed.D.)

PART II: Background Information

1. Sex: _____MALE _____FEMALE

2. Marital Status: _____Single _____Divorced
_____Married _____Separated

3. Race: _____American Indian/Alaskan Native
_____Asian/Pacific Islander/Filipino
_____Black
_____Caucasian
_____Hispanic/Latino

4. Age: _____18-20 _____27-30
_____21-23 _____31-40
_____24-26 _____41 and older

5. Number of Dependents:
_____1-2 _____5-6
_____3-4 _____6 or more

6. Mark all sources of support you are using to finance your education at S.C.C.

_____ Savings _____ G.I. Benefits
_____ Loans _____ Full- or part-time work
_____ Support from parents _____ Aid from spouse
_____ Employer support _____ Grants
_____ Scholarships _____ AFDC
_____ Other

7. If you are currently employed, about how many hours per week do you work?

_____ 1 to 10

_____ 11 to 20

_____ 21 to 30

_____ 31 to 40

_____ Over 40

8. List your occupation here: _____

9. About how much of the money you use for school and living expenses comes from someone else?

_____ None

_____ 1% - 19%

_____ 20% - 39%

_____ 40% - 50%

_____ 60% - 79%

_____ 80% -100%

APPENDIX C

HELP Followuo Questionnaire

Please indicate your response to the following statements:

	Strongly Aqree	Aqree	No Opinion	Disaqree	Strongly Disaqree
1. The HELP program gave me support in my personal life.					
2. The HELP program improved my confidence in myself.					
3. I felt like a more competent student after I completed the HELP program					
4. Things I learned in the HELP program will help me improve my life style.					
5. The HELP program gave me specific skills that will improve my chances for success in college.					
6. The HELP program improved my ability to get along with people.					
7. The HELP program improved my chances for getting a good job.					
8. I would recommend the HELP program to a friend.					

9. Please complete the following sentence:

If I hadn't completed the HELP program, at this time I would be doing

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX C

HELP Followup Questionnaire

Please indicate your response to the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The HELP program gave me support in my personal life.	40	28	6	2	
2. The HELP program improved my confidence in myself.	60	16		4	
3. I felt like a more competent student after I completed the HELP program.	30	32	6	4	
4. Things I learned in the HELP program will help me improve my life style.	25	40	9		
5. The HELP program gave me specific skills that will improve my chances for success in college.	55	28			
6. The HELP program improved my ability to get along with people.	50	16	3	6	
7. The HELP program improved my chances for getting a good job.	25	12	18	8	
8. I would recommend the HELP program to a friend.	50	25	3	2	

9. Please complete the following sentence:

If I hadn't completed the HELP program, at this time I would be doing _____